agreed to maintain peace and tranquillity along the Line of Actual Control in the India-China border areas, without prejudice to their respective positions on the alignment of the line of actual control as well as on the boundary question. Since there is no commonly delineated LAC between India and China, situations have arisen on the ground that could have been avoided if we had a common perception of the LAC. Government take up perceived violations through established mechanisms including the Joint Working Group, the Expert Group, border personnel meetings, flag meetings and diplomatic channels.

**Voluntary ban on nuclear tests**

†*98.SHRI RAGHUNANDAN SHARMA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the process to lift the one-sided voluntary ban on nuclear tests which has been declared in the Indo-US joint declaration;

(b) its impact on the Indo-US nuclear deal, if Government conducts the nuclear tests by keeping aside the one-sided voluntary ban; and

(c) whether Government has received any assurance from US Government that fuel supply to nuclear power reactors would set up consequent upon the nuclear deal continue unabated even in the situation when India conducts the nuclear test?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) Government had declared a voluntary moratorium on nuclear explosive tests in 1998 after Pokhran II. In the India-US Joint Statement issued on 18th July 2005, Government only reiterated its willingness to continue with its unilateral moratorium on nuclear testing. There is nothing in the "Agreement for Cooperation between the Government of India and the Government of the United States of America Concerning Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy" signed October 10, 2008, which ties the hands of Government or legally constrains our options to protect India's security and defence needs. The Agreement provides for a multi-layered consultation mechanism to protect our interests as regards uninterrupted operation of our reactors in case either party decides to terminate.

**Modernization of post offices**

†*99.SHRI UDAY PRATAP SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is contemplating to modernize the post offices in order to accelerate and modernize the postal system; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Modernization of post offices is an ongoing programme. Upto 31.3.08 the Department modernized (Improved Ergonomics) 2504 Post Offices and computerized 9639 Post Offices. In the current year, under 'Project Arrow' 500 Post Offices are being modernized.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.